India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

LORD KITCHENER'S annuity is shortly to be asked for in the House of Commons, and there is a general expectation of an important debate. It may be hoped that in what is said of the astounding barbarities which followed the battle of Omdurman the effect upon Indian opinion of the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb and the mutilation of his body will not be forgotten. We print on another page some important evidence of the feelings excited among Indian Mahometans and other Indians by this gross outrage. In these days of the "robust conscience" it was not perhaps to be expected that English soldiers in the flush of a machine-made victory would think of the effect which their excesses might have upon the moral power of England as an Imperial ruler. But Lord Kitchener, who is said to be a prudent man of business, might at least have hesitated at the inexpediency of revolting the many millions of Mahometans who own allegiance to the British Crown. We commend to the notice of Members of the House of Commons the Moslem petition and the passages from the *Moslem Chronicle* which will be found elsewhere. The matter has, as was to be expected, provoked a good deal of indignant remark in the Indian press. No doubt the volume of criticism would have been greater but for the new law of sedition which thoughtfully makes it a penal offence for Indians to utter anything that may bring the authorities into contempt. It is a pity that some of the authorities themselves, who have condoned Lord Kitchener's barbarity, are not amenable to the same law.

The *Pioneer Mail* (April 14) seems to throw some new light on the countermanding of the Chitral reliefs—that is, the changing of the garrison which holds Chitral. The troops that have to move each way, when the change is made, are one section (two guns) of a mountain battery, a company of sappers and two battalions of native infantry, with a native field-hospital—in all about 1,800 men.

The relief (says the *Pioneer*) differs from others in this respect, that for the greater part of the distance, namely, from Kila Drosh to Chakdarrah, the country passed through is not held by any Indian garrisons. It is in the possession of the Nawab of Dir, a subsidised tribal chief who receives Rs. 10,000 annually for maintaining the road and levy posts upon it, while a similar sum is granted to him as compensation for the abolition of taxes upon trade formerly levied. As the Nawab received 400 Snider rifles and a liberal supply of ammunition when the arrangement was made with him in September 1895, he is in a position to keep the peace from Chakdarrah to Ashreth at the foot of the Lowarai Pass over which the road from Dir crosses to Drosh. His levies are well armed, and are in a fair state of discipline; they are inspected frequently by selected native officers of the Indian Army; and as they are always paid at the end of each month under the eye of these inspecting officers, they are content with their position.

Nevertheless it is clear that the changing of the garrison has always been a risky business, and that in 1897 a disaster was narrowly avoided. This year, we are told, there was no sign of impending trouble but—"no precautions will be neglected."

Tribal risings on that part of the frontier come with a suddenness that is always remarkable, and the political officer and the military commander can never trust implicitly to the reports that reach them of peace in the land. There was some idea last autumn that the Swat moveable column could be broken up, the small obligatory garrisons at the Malakand and Chakdarrah only being maintained; but wiser counsels prevailed, and the column still keeps its ground in the Lower Swat Valley. It is equipped with full transport and can move to Chakdarrah, or beyond to the Laram Pass, at a few hours' notice. It constitutes in fact the supporting force of the regiments marching in relief, and its strength lies greatly in its mobility. The movements of the troops will begin at the end of the present month; and in order that there shall be no question of immediate action in case of any alarming demonstration by this or that fanatical leader, the British garrison at Rawalpindi will be kept at full strength until the reliefs have been completed.

All of which is distinctly interesting in view of (1) the repeated official statement that the Peshawar-Chitral road and the occupation of Chitral have always been sources of delight to the tribesmen concerned, and (2) the official announcement from Simla, on April 13, that "owing to the peaceful state of affairs on the frontier, the despatch of Chitral reliefs, which were ordered to proceed thither in May, has been countermanded."

The protest of Sir John Woodburn in Council against the depletion of the Provincial treasuries by the central Government, although practically useless at the moment, will eventually work out its useful effects, for it is impossible that the grab system of Sir James Westland can go on with impunity. When famine appeared in 1896 the Bengal Government had a balance of 58 lakhs to its credit. The statutory minimum is 20 lakhs, and, under the rules of 1881, two-thirds of the difference, or roundly 25½ lakhs, was the utmost amount that should have been requisitioned by the Government of India. In fact the Government of India took 49 lakhs, or nearly twice as much as they were entitled to divert, leaving the credit balance of the Bengal Government at barely 10 lakhs, or scarcely half its proper figure. The Lieutenant-Governor has demanded to be reimbursed from the overflowing exchequer, but he has got only 17 lakhs. True Sir James Westland makes out, by a feat of prestidigitation, that the amount is not 17 but 29½ lakhs. The difference he makes up by "2½ lakhs mentioned in the third paragraph of the Financial Statement, and a grant of 10 lakhs to the General Hospital." The *Indian Nation*, after diligent search, has failed to discover the 2½ lakhs; and, as it remarks, Sir John Woodburn had anticipated the point about the 10 lakhs by contending that the hospital is one in which the Europeans of Assam and Upper India are quite as much interested as those of Bengal. Obviously, as Sir John argues, and as we have frequently urged, the Westland plan discourages all "local thrift and circumspection," and will induce the local Governments to "spend their balances every year in hot haste," and with corresponding lack of judicious consideration, in order to avoid being pillaged from headquarters.

Sir Steuart Bayley and Sir Alexander Mackenzie were no less emphatic in remonstrance; and Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir Courtenay Ilbert recorded a prophetic joint-minute of dissent from the increase of the Military Department, whose wild vagaries have been the prolific source of all the necessity for drawing upon the Provincial balances. As the *Champion* justly points out, "the more the military policy became predominant under the two weak-kneed Viceroys, Lords Lansdowne and Elgin, the greater the burden of military expenditure—in mobilisation, special defences, border expeditions, strategic roads and railways, and so forth"—though, of course, the public were invited to lay the blame elsewhere, namely, on the perversity of the drooping exchange. At the end of every quinquennial contract more pressure has been put upon the Local Governments. The *Champion* usefully recalls the definite figures since 1884-85:—

Taking surpluses and deficits together—despite new taxation—the net result is a deficit of one crore. Let us state some broad facts of the period. Land revenue has given an increase of 5·84 crores, taxation of 6·04 crores and other principal heads of revenue of 1·71 crore. Thus the total growth of revenue is 13·59 crores. Against this there is a decrease of 3·15 crores of opium revenue, which brings down the net increase of revenue to 10·44 crores. On the expenditure side the army charges increased by 7·09 crores. Thus it will be seen that fully 68 per cent. of the increment in the revenue since 1884-85 was absorbed by that insatiable harpy the Military Department. And it should be remembered that the growth of 10 crores in

land revenue, taxation, etc., has been *entirely owing* to the diligence and careful management of the Provincial Governments.

Is it not a wonder that the Government of India is not heartily ashamed of itself, and that the Local Governments bear with the grievance so quietly?

The *Champion's* criticism goes beyond the arguments and suggestions of the National Congress of 1896. It holds that "the entire principle should be inverted." "As the Central Government is only *a distributive and not a productive* entity," says our contemporary, "it is altogether unfair that it should be allowed to arrogate to itself the right of keeping what it chooses." There must be decentralisation; "but no scheme of decentralisation can be perfect which omits to make the different Provinces absolutely independent of the Central Government with regard to finance."

This can only be accomplished when there is a disruption of the Central and Centralised Government. The day, we repeat, must come when the whole system of administration must collapse in order to be overhauled and remodelled, and that on the principle recommended by John Bright, that is, of making each province a water-tight compartment responsible only to one controlling authority at Westminster. The Viceroy may or may not be maintained as an ornamental figurehead of the State. But when each province is made thoroughly independent to work out its own financial salvation, then only may we see domestic reforms quickening and general progress. Under such a system of provincial finance, there would be only *one* broad but most equitable and automatic principle of contribution towards the expenditure of the Central authority. Each province should be bound to pay a *fixed percentage* of its revenue towards Imperial expenditure—be it 25 or 30 or 40 per cent. But once the percentage is fixed, there should be no deviation from it, unless a dire emergency, like famine or a war, which are inevitable and righteous, demands an extra contribution.

Meantime, the industry and thrift of the Provincial Governments are exploited for the irresponsible projects of the Central Government, and all true development is hindered and discouraged.

Dr. Karl Blind writes:—"The extracts given in your number of April 28, from the article in the Berlin *Zeitgeist*—the Literary Supplement of the *Berliner Tageblatt*—as to the conversation I once had with an English Cabinet Minister, an old Liberal friend of mine, are perfectly correct. Allow me to mention that the other saying I quoted (namely: 'In our great Asiatic Empire we have rather accidentally stumbled on to greatness'), was not addressed to me personally. It is a historically recorded remark of an English statesman. As to the strange story about Mr. Gladstone having imagined that the National Congresses of India dealt with infant marriages or child betrothals, there is no misconception at the root of that story. The Indian of high rank, an admirer of Mr. Gladstone, who went to Hawarden to hear his opinion about those National Congresses, himself gave a report of that conversation, many years ago, immediately after the interview, in a London paper. His report, I need not say, was not contradicted. It is an unfortunate fact that Mr. Gladstone, on another occasion, made light even of the possible loss of India, by saying that if, by some revolution of the earth, England were to lose her dominions, Anglo-Saxon energy would soon make up for it in some other part of the inhabitable globe."

The *Times of India* (April 15), commenting on the petition from Indian traders in Rhodesia which recently appeared in our columns, writes:—

The broad contention, so far as Natal is concerned, is that the colony cannot justifiably discriminate between indentured and non-indentured immigrants. Indians did not go to Natal uninvited. They went there in response to the urgent requests of the Colonial Government. The colony needed imported labour to save itself from ruin, and India was the only place where labourers could be recruited. But while the colonists gladly availed themselves of the services of Indians as hewers of wood and drawers of water, they have constantly attempted to deprive them of those rights of free competition in trade which should be their inalienable privilege as British subjects. They decline to compete with the Indian traders in the open market, and endeavour to foster Protection in its most contemptible form by hedging them round with vexatious restrictions. In Rhodesia the position is somewhat different, inasmuch as Indian labour has not been utilised in that territory. But Indian traders have long been peacefully established at Beira, and when the railway was built from Beira to Umtali the natural enterprise of the traders led them to follow the line into British territory and to open stores at Umtali. Efforts are now being made to effect their practical ejectment from Rhodesia, and the unfortunate merchants will therefore be driven to seek once more in the dominions of the King of Portugal the justice and the kindly treatment denied to them under their own flag. It is in the highest degree humiliating to know that the traditions of British impartiality to men of all races and creeds have been so far departed from in South Africa that British subjects are being compelled to seek sanctuary upon Portuguese soil from the tyrannous oppression of men with whom they are supposed to enjoy common rights under the British Crown. The injustice suffered by Indian traders in Africa will never be removed until the Home Government decides to accord to them the protection they have a right to expect.

Our readers will be glad to see from our Parliamentary report that, in response to a request from Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Chamberlain has agreed to prepare a Return showing the disabilities or restrictions to which British Indians are subjected in the several British colonies and dependencies.

A petition purporting to be signed by some 21,000 Uitlanders of British descent or nationality has been sent from the Transvaal to the Colonial Secretary in Downing Street. A correspondent of the *Times* (May 2) says "no one at this time of day tries to question the reality of these complaints—the suffering entailed on the Uitlander, the gravity of their effect upon all South Africa." And he enumerates the complaints under fifteen distinct heads. For example:—

(1) They have no vote in the levying of taxes.
(2) No voice in payment of officials.
(3) No control of the education of the country.
(4) No power in the municipal government of their town, Johannesburg.
(5) Their newspapers are gagged. If an editor offends Mr. Kruger he may be sent to prison, or sent to live at Pietpotsgeitersrust to die of fever, or sent out of the country altogether.
(6) They are not permitted to hold public meetings. . . . .
(7) They pay almost the entire taxation of the country. . . . .

These are specimens, and we have taken them from the head of the list as being presumably the most important points.

Now, we do not give any opinion on the Uitlanders' case. But we do say that if the same complaints could justly be made, not by Uitlanders, but by people in their own country, against alien masters, the case would be very much stronger. We ask, therefore, these questions:

(1) Have Indians any vote in the levying of taxes?
(2) Have Indians any voice in the payment of officials?
(3) Have Indians any control of the education of the country?
(4) Have Indians any power in the municipal government of their towns? And, where such power has been conceded, is it not in imminent peril of being reduced to a mere form?
(5) Are not Indian newspapers gagged? If an editor offends the local collector, may he not be sent to prison or worse?
(6) If Indians hold a public meeting, is it not under the menacing shadow of the sedition law? . . . .
(7) Do not Indians pay—is it worth while to say "almost"?—the entire taxation of the country?

We should be glad if we could believe that while Mr. Chamberlain is meditating justice for the Uitlanders, Lord George Hamilton is wrestling with the ways and means of doing justice to the Indians—Uitlanders in their own country. But your "Imperialist" has always at least one blind eye.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* records on a single page of its issue of April 9 two more assaults committed by Europeans upon Indians.

(1) The latest "shooting case" comes from the Madras side, it says, "the victim, of course, being a Native." Gunner Love went out shooting in the Vandalur jungle, eight miles from Madras, with two comrades. Separating himself from his friends, and professing to go home by a short cut, Love fell in with a Native girl, whose cries brought several villagers to the scene, and in a scuffle a villager was shot, and presently died. On examination at Saidapet it was found that the fatal wound had been inflicted by a gunshot at short distance. The girl had complained of being outraged by Love, but on examination by Colonel Damia of the Indian Medical Service there were found no signs to support the charge. Love was arrested on a double charge of rape and culpable homicide not amounting to murder. We shall watch the progress of the case.

(2) The other assault is reported from Assam. One Behari Kahar, an ex-coolie, residing near Rungliting Tea Estate, reported to the Deputy-Commissioner that the death of a boy had been caused by Mr. Cumming, the manager of the Garden. The *Eastern Herald* of Dibrugarh says Behari alleged that "Mr. Cumming gave the deceased boy, who was aged 12 or 13 years, some severe beating

with a cane, in consequence of which the boy died." The same paper further states that Behari deposed "that the Doctor Babu and the Chowkidar held the boy in their grasp when Mr. Cumming struck him." The case is under enquiry. Mr. Cumming is said to have admitted the assault, but to have maintained that the boy died from "natural causes" and not from the effects of the beating. This case also will need watching.

The latest statistics of the cost of the administration of justice in India appear to be some nine years old, and to be hidden away in the Supplement to the *Gazette of India* of January 11, 1890. According to this document, the civil courts of Bengal yielded a surplus of 14½ lakhs, and those of Madras a surplus of 37,000 rupees. Elsewhere there was a deficiency: 10 lakhs in Bombay, 8½ lakhs in Burma, over 5 in the Punjab, about 2¾ in the North-West, and on the whole a net loss of 12½ lakhs. Sir James Westland says "the courts, as a whole, must be made to pay their way." The principle, we agree with the *Englishman*, is by no means an obvious necessity. The duty of the Government, we should have imagined, was to set up adequate courts of justice without the least regard to the point whether the court fees would meet the expenditure. "It is not seemly," as the *Englishman* says, "that the judges should be regarded as earning their pay by the fines they inflict in the nature of court fees." It is another point—and a sore point, naturally, to the *Englishman*—that Sir James should take the surplus of the Provinces that do most law business to make up the deficiencies of the Provinces that do not pay their own judicial way. For the abstraction is most deeply felt by Bengal. "The question that the public will naturally ask," says the *Englishman*, "is whether it is fair to a Province to appropriate for the benefit of other parts of India the revenue of a Department which is really supplied by the inhabitants of Bengal." We think there is great force in our contemporary's contention that the first claim on any Bengal surplus is the relief of the judges of the civil courts, who are mostly overworked, and the improvement of the pay and the house accommodation of munsifs. Or some decided step might be taken towards the separation of judicial and executive functions. Each Government should make its own provision, without raiding the preserves of its neighbours.

We are very glad to see that the late Mr. Manomohan Ghose is yet fresh in the memory of his friends. There has now been established in the Bethune College, Calcutta, "the Manomohan Ghose Memorial Library," to which many of his English friends, ladies and gentlemen, have contributed. The Lahore *Tribune* remarks that Mr. Ghose was "a patriot who counted admirers in every part of India." There are many in England who vie with his countrymen in their admiration of his character and career, and it is pleasant to think that English have joined with Indian friends in erecting a substantial memorial of a good man and an ardent patriot.

It will be advantageous to note some of the points made by Indian members of Council in the Budget debate. Mr. Mehta did well to refuse to believe that the financial improvement of the year is a golden shower from the skies, and to remind his hearers that it came ultimately in some way from the pockets of the people. Referring to the early realisation of almost the full extent of the suspension of the Government demand owing to the famine, Mr. Mehta remarked:—

> This phenomenon has been read as testifying to the astonishing recuperative power of the agricultural population. But signs have not been wanting to show that a portion of this phenomenon at least is occasioned by the rigidity with which revenue assessments are collected under a rigid land revenue code, which has completely done away with the interference of the Civil Courts even to the small extent to which it formerly existed. I know that my hon. friend asserts that this rigidity which was incautiously admitted by Sir Theodore Hope in this Council, was only a condition of things which existed 18 years ago, and that the Government of India had since applied effectual remedies. I should like to know what those remedies are so far as the Bombay Presidency is concerned.

Mr. Chitnavis advocated the remission of the Pandhari tax in the Central Provinces, and the reduction of the high assessments in certain parts of those Provinces, amounting to as much as 70 or 75 per cent. of the rental. Mr. Ananda Charlu, while approving the decision of the Government not to remit any taxation at the present juncture, insisted on the earliest possible reduction of the salt tax. It may also be noted that Sir Griffith Evans called attention to a variety of clamant necessities in the department of law and justice.

Sir Antony MacDonnell passed some very sensible criticisms on the working of the Indian railways, on the occasion of the opening of the Ganges Gogra Doab extension of the Bengal and North-Western Railway at Man Junction. The more generally important remarks refer to the convenience and accommodation of passengers. Sir Antony thinks the rates should be cheaper, and the service of trains more suited to the needs of the population. "In this country," comments the Lahore *Tribune*, "it is the convenience of first and second class passengers which the railway authorities chiefly study, the class of passengers which finds the bulk of the railway income is not regarded worth serious thought." This points to a faithful reproduction in India of the curiously perverse ideas cherished by railway managers in England. "In times of pressure," says the *Tribune*, "poor third class passengers are packed in waggons and open trucks like goods." Much like the German fourth class. The most unfortunate point however is the lack of proper arrangements for long journeys, in consequence of which the health of travellers is often imperilled if not also injured. And with this may be coupled the defective character of the waiting-room accommodation for ladies. The railway managers may in time listen to a Lieutenant-Governor even if they turn a deaf ear to the complaints of the public that supports their lines.

The *Indian Daily News*, in a thoughtful article in its "Overland Summary", reviews the Sugar Duty question. "It is certainly a matter of considerable surprise," says our contemporary, "that, among the Legislative Council of the Government of India, not a single force (? voice) was raised in the interest of orthodox economics in the late Sugar Duty debate." The writer thinks that the action of Mr. Mehta, Mr. Chitnavis, and Mr. Ananda Charlu was "in the natural order of things"—the sugar cultivator being a poor man, a poor man being a deserving object of charity, and unquestioning charity being an ingrained Indian principle. What astonishes him, however, is not so much the departure from strict principle, but rather the precipitate action of the Council in not giving such departure very careful and full consideration. Still, the departure was a blunder. "Had the Government," says the writer, "instead of adopting the method of countervailing duties, adopted the actual methods of their rivals, and offered bounties to the amounts" given by foreign countries "to all manufacturers exporting sugar to the countries mentioned, instead of sapping the energies of the Indian manufacturers, they would have increased their enterprise, and the sugar industry under those altered conditions might have revived; but, under the proposed system of small countervailing duties, we are unable to take a particularly hopeful view of the future of the industry in India." No wonder: "what is required is more energy, more invention, and greater initiative and discernment." All which essential qualities are sedulously discouraged by artificial props.

Some ten days ago the *Times of India* gave currency to a report, alleged to be based on unimpeachable London authority, that Russia had acquired by secret compact with Persia the right to occupy a port on the Persian Gulf at her good pleasure. On April 27 the *Times* correspondent at Allahabad telegraphed that the Government of India "knows absolutely nothing to warrant the report," and he cited the opinion of the *Pioneer* that "a concession wrung or bought from Teheran, 800 miles distant from the nearest Russian garrison, could possess no importance except as a diplomatic lever." On May 3 the *Times* published the Persian Minister's express declaration that the report of the alleged agreement "is absolutely devoid of foundation." "Russia," says the *Times*, apparently repeating the words of the Minister, "has not secured any rights in any ports belonging to Persia on the Persian Gulf, and the rumour is as ill-timed as many others which have recently been circulated regarding the position of Russia in Persia." Very ill-timed indeed in view of the recent declarations of Lord Salisbury as to Anglo-Russian relations, present and prospective. The *Times of India* may for once take a severe censure home to itself.

HISTORY OF THE SARACENS.[1]

"A CONCISE account of the rise and decline of the Saracenic power and of the economic, social, and intellectual development of the Arab nation, from the earliest times to the destruction of Bagdad and the expulsion of the Moors from Spain": so runs the comprehensive second title which Ameer Ali has prefixed to his history. It will be obvious at once that he has set himself no easy task, and if he can only be considered to have partially succeeded we must not withhold our admiration for the learning, ability, and industry here abundantly displayed. "To arrest attention, to enlist sympathy, to evoke interest," says the author justly, "something more is needed than a bare narration of wars and conquests." He proposes to supply that "something more" by adding to a description of the military successes of the Saracens an account of "their inner life and their social and economic development." But "something more" is wanting still before the history can carry the reader captive. We want the historic imagination which sees vividly all that it attempts to describe, and we want, or at least we are greatly helped by the presence of, a certain distinction of style. In these two respects Ameer Ali's work leaves a good deal to be desired; and the consequence is that, in spite of its learning and in spite of the fascination of the subject, it is distinctly disappointing. It is only fair to remember that it is written in an acquired language; and, if that is taken into account, it is a more than creditable performance. But the author's learning is so great and his command of English so good (such a solecism as "transpiring" for "happening," on p. 406, stands almost alone) that we may pay him the higher compliment, when he writes for the English reader, of treating him as an English writer. In the desire to be concise Ameer Ali misses the splendid opportunities his subject gave him of being picturesque. The book is overweighted with details. No reader can be expected to take an interest in, much less to remember, the long lists of chieftains, with names and titles whose length is only equalled by their obscurity. In the minuteness of detail the general impression is lost; the reader "cannot see the wood for the trees." This is the more to be regretted because the author shows in his preface that he has a really philosophical conception of history. The failure of the Saracens themselves he attributes to their neglect of the teachings of history, which "comes down to us rich with the spoils of time." "The Saracen's genius for government was intuitive, inborn, self-taught—not acquired. With an overweening sense of pride in his race and creed, he stalked through the world feeling, although not proclaiming, that he was an Arab citizen, a member of a great and powerful commonwealth." This is well said; but the lessons both of Saracen chivalry and of Saracen intolerance would have been far more impressive if their story had been sketched with a bolder hand. To compare any modern historical work with Gibbon is to apply a terribly severe test. But the subject in this case makes the comparison inevitable; and one goes back from the minutiae of Ameer Ali's pages to the magnificent chapters in which Gibbon sketches the rise and progress of the Saracen Empire with a new sense of the greatness of the eighteenth century historian.

The least satisfactory portion of the book is the account of the Crusades, which is disfigured by a partisan spirit. "In European histories," we are told, "the Crusades are surrounded with the halo of romance, and every knight or soldier engaged in it (*sic*) is regarded as the beau ideal of chivalry. It shall be my duty, in the interest of truth, to raise the veil from this picture, and to reveal in the short space at my command the ghastliness of these wars, the cruel, savage and treacherous character of those who were engaged in them, and the dire miseries they inflicted upon Western Asia." Ameer Ali proceeds to describe the toleration which Islam had for centuries accorded to Christian pilgrims to Palestine, and to represent the ill-treatment and robbery of pilgrims in the eleventh century, which caused Pope Urban II to summon the Councils of Placentia and Clermont in 1095, as mere occasional incidents, comparable to the occasional ill-treatment of Moslem pilgrims at the present day by their brethren of the desert. It was something more than this, that roused the fury of Christendom. No historian can understand the Crusades who does not first comprehend the intense feeling of the Christendom of that time about the Holy City. That Jerusalem should be in the hands of Mahometans at all would be sufficiently galling to Christian feeling; but the conquest of Palestine by the Seljukian Turks brought about a state of things that seemed intolerable. "The strife of East and West," says Professor Tout, "assumed a new aspect when a barbarous and unteachable soldier, mighty only in destruction, became the chief agent of Eastern advance. It was no longer the continuance of the struggle between Eastern and Western civilisation, that was as old as Marathon. Henceforth it was a strife between the only possible civilisation and the most brutal and hopeless barbarism." The Crusades, in other words, were not merely wars of aggression, Europe hurling itself against Asia; they were also, in part at least, wars of defence. This aspect of the Crusades is wholly ignored by our author. And without absolutely ignoring the vast difference between Turk and Arab, he does not lay sufficient stress upon the fact that the Turk was incapable of appreciating either the spiritual side of the Islamic religion, which he accepted as a soldier accepts the command of his general, or the brilliant civilisation of the Saracen. It is foolish to represent Western historians as engaged in a conspiracy to idealise the Crusades. Whatever may have been the case once, there is nothing in which the average European historian of the present day takes more delight than in overthrowing some idol of his fathers. The quotations given by Ameer Ali himself from European writers sufficiently illustrate this. Throughout his narrative of the Crusades the author seizes every occasion to insist upon the cruelty and treachery of the Christians and the generosity of their Saracen foes. He leaves us abruptly in the eighth Crusade (1251) with the Franks still in possession of Damietta. Can this be because, when Damietta was taken by the Saracens, the great mass of the captives were put to the sword, St. Louis and the great lords being spared only at the price of an enormous ransom? Neither side in those wars had a monopoly of either treachery, or greed, or chivalry.

The story of events is broken at intervals by chapters of "Retrospect," in which a careful and elaborate account is given of the Saracen system of government and of the social customs and intellectual life of the Arabs. The book is well equipped with maps and illustrations, and supplied with a good marginal analysis and index.

[1] "A Short History of the Saracens." With Maps, Illustrations, and Genealogical Tables. By Ameer Ali Syed, M.A., C.I.E., Judge of her Majesty's High Court of Judicature at Fort William in Bengal. London: Macmillan and Co.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE INDIAN FAMINE.

By E. H. Pickersgill, M.P.

THE publication of the report of the Indian Famine Commission, to which attention was drawn in India a few weeks ago, has been quickly followed by the appearance of three volumes of minutes of evidence relating respectively to (1) Bengal (2) the Madras Presidency, and (3) the North-West Provinces and Oudh. I have imposed upon myself the task of searching through these somewhat dreary Blue-books, with a view to extract from them such items of information or argument as may be interesting or significant.

It appears that the Commissioners commenced their labours by drawing up a list of "Questions for the guidance of witnesses." These questions, which are arranged under various heads, comprise no fewer than 345 paragraphs, and constitute as formidable and searching a set of interrogatories as was ever administered. They are for the most part interesting and suggestive, and curiously whet the reader's appetite for information. But unfortunately it is always much easier to propound questions than it is to answer them: and in the result one is mocked by something of the nature of a Barmecidal feast.

Under the heading entitled "The pressure of population" the following curious question is propounded:—

Irrigation, we assume, increases the productiveness of the soil; it is also acknowledged to be concerned in the generation of malaria in many extensive tracts of the country. Malaria, we have proof, lessens the fecundity of the people. Do these facts suggest to you the involuntary establishment of an equilibrium between the population and the food production of irrigated tracts? *Would such*

equilibrium, brought about in the way which these facts suggest, be a result to be desired ?

In the first place, this question assumes a necessary connexion between irrigation and malaria, which is not supported by the facts. Some of the best irrigated districts in India are remarkably free from malaria, and some of the driest tracts are swept by it. But, passing this by, there is a truly Machiavellian touch about the enquiry so gravely made, whether it is "*desirable*" to infect the people with malaria by way of diminishing their fecundity.

These volumes contain some shocking examples of the terrible straits to which the inhabitants of the stricken districts were reduced. One witness stated that he had seen mothers digging up ants' holes for grain, and another declared that the famished people collected from the manure the grain which had passed through the bodies of cows. As regards the mortality, it would seem that the compensating influence on the public health resulting from the exceptional dryness of the season tended to mask the full effects of the scarcity of food. At the same time there can be no doubt that the actual mortality was far in excess of the numbers reported. One witness before the Commission, viz., the Rev. H. Forman, of Fatehpur—stated that a superintendent of a large relief work told him that at a time when he was counting as many as thirty dead bodies every morning, the police were reporting about ten a day. The same witness also stated that a subordinate official told him that, on being rebuked for reporting so many deaths from starvation, he thereafter substituted secondary causes, such as fever, or dysentery, or diarrhœa. As Mr. Le Fanu, member of the Board of Revenue of Madras, stated in his evidence with characteristic frankness, "*Cholera comes in very handily when famine mortality is in question.*"

The Madras Blue-book contains evidence, both official and non-official, which irresistibly leads to the conclusion that the report of the Commission on the conduct of famine operations in that Presidency was too favourable. The Rev. W. H. Campbell, who was a member of a Relief Sub-Committee, gives a detailed account of his experience in Cuddapah District. In the beginning of 1897 the authorities failed to grasp the situation and refused to believe in the existence of anything like severe distress. In some cases inspecting officers formed a wrong impression respecting the condition of the people by seeing on the arms of the women what they believed to be silver ornaments, but what Mr. Campbell on personal examination found to be only base metal not worth more than an anna or two at the best. At this time everything was done that could be done to dissuade the people from resorting to the relief works, and in many cases fines were so ruthlessly imposed that the people were practically forced to leave. On the other hand, a great many persons were employed on the works who ought to have been receiving gratuitous relief in their own villages. Among these were old and sickly persons, mothers with young infants, and women in an advanced stage of pregnancy. Mr. Campbell states that he saw women with twin babies on their knees attempting to break stones. This non-official testimony is to a large extent corroborated by Mr. Le Fanu himself.

In my opinion (he says) we always start gratuitous relief too late in the Madras Presidency. No one who has not actually gone among the poorer classes, into their houses, and watched them at cooking and meal times, talked with them under the village tree, and in the shikar camp, can have any idea of the amount of absolute misery which may exist before officialdom recognises that the time for relief has come. In my opinion, year by year, our officers are getting to know less of the people, and to be more and more out of sympathy and touch with them. Government itself is removed from contact with the people for six months of the year. . . . It is more and more necessary that we should insist on a full working knowledge of the Vernacular languages in the ranks of the Civil Service.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting Mr. Le Fanu's reply to one of the questions propounded by the Commission. The enquiry was as follows:—

What, in your opinion, is the greatest distance at which the distressed inhabitants of a village may be induced to attend relief works? Do you think it would be practicable to withhold relief from all fairly able-bodied labourers who refused to attend relief works at the distance stated in reply to the last question?

Mr. Le Fanu's answer was brief and caustic:—

Practicable—yes. Many things are practicable, but not expedient. Cruel and injudicious, also yes.

Mr. Le Fanu denounces with characteristic boldness what he calls the "skin them to the bone" policy. It was tried in 1877, he says, under the auspices of Sir Richard Temple, and the new school, which does not know 1877, would fain revert to Sir Richard Temple's policy:—

If (he adds) Government requires a villager to eat the last measure of seed-corn, to sell his wife's "Thuli," or to sell his cattle before giving him relief, the result would be that, at the close of the famine, all the poorer pattadars would be absolutely pauperised, and a heavy fall in revenue would follow. By admitting such persons to relief, we hand them over to their normal avocations, at the close of distress, in the same condition in which we found them, and the body politic does not suffer: the revenue remains steady, and normal prosperity is at once restored.

It may be mentioned here that Mr. Le Fanu proposed that the forests should be thrown open to free grazing in December, 1896. Permission was, however, then refused, and not granted until May, 1897. But it was "too late then to be of much use. Cattle cannot march to the forests in a season when there is not a blade of grass, or a leaf, or a drop of water, on the route. The cattle, too, were too much exhausted to make a march of any kind." Upon this point the Commissioners seem to admit that Mr. Le Fanu was right.

Mr. Campbell also states that up to the end of February, 1897, kist was being levied, and levied by distraint, even in the worst affected parts of the district. The district officials took no notice of the complaints of the rayats, but the Board of Revenue in response to numerous petitions issued an order suspending the collection of dry kist pending enquiry. On this the collection for grain crops below eight annas' yield was suspended in two or three of the taluks. But the order was disregarded in Pulivindla taluk, which in Mr. Campbell's opinion was perhaps the worst part of the district, and collections went on there for quite a month after the Board's order was issued.

It is interesting to note in these volumes that two witnesses at least are impressed with the desirability of establishing agricultural banks in India. One of these is Raja Partab Bahadur Singh, of Partabgarh, who states that

as the agriculturists are completely in the hands of village mahajans who often exact their own arbitrary terms, it is high time that agricultural banks were opened at convenient distances in the interior of the country.

A more important contribution on the same subject is made by Mr. B. C. Basu, Assistant to Director of Land Records and Agriculture, Assam, from whose pen a very interesting Note on the creation of Village Granaries in Bengal appears in the Blue-book relating to that Presidency, at page 143. Mr. Basu points out that the control of the food supply has unnaturally passed into the hands of the village grain-lenders or banias, and he suggests that the restoration of the control of the food supply to those who produce it may, in course of time, be accomplished by the gradual establishment of co-operative agricultural associations and of village granaries owned and managed by them.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

SINCE I last wrote the member of the Government who has made himself most notorious, or perhaps it would be more polite to say has attracted attention, is Sir John Gorst. Sir John is somewhat of a puzzle to me. He expresses many fine views about the labour question, and especially with regard to education, but he does nothing. It may be said that he is held back by his colleagues, and that when he would do good evil (in the shape of his colleagues) is present with him. Of course a self-respecting man would in these circumstances resign, but self-respect was never Sir John's forte. So he sticks on, jeering at his own party every now and then, indulging in open sneers at his leaders in the House of Commons, exciting the laughter of the Opposition, the wrath of the Ministerialists, and a feeling of something very like contempt on both sides. Somehow or other the House likes to see a man who takes office either stick to his party loyally or if he disagrees with that party to resign, and Sir John does neither.

I have said that the Opposition laughed now and then when Sir John in explaining his education estimates on Friday flouted his own leaders. I may say in passing that none of his leaders were present. They always leave him the whole Treasury bench to himself at such times. But in spite of these occasional laughs the speech was more

than melancholy—it was positively sickening in some of its revelations. Sir John Gorst read a letter from some manager of a school, and it contained this phrase, "there are to-day in our national and board schools thousands of little white slaves," and the Minister then proceeded to give facts which amply justified the use of so startling a phrase.

I do not think I ever heard a more deplorable recital in my life than the following figures merely communicated to the House without word-painting or comment. The figures refer to children who have to work as well as to go to school:—

Under six years of age, 131; between six and seven, 1,120; between seven and eight, 4,211; between eight and nine, 11,027; and between nine and ten, 22,131.

This was bad enough, but it was when Sir John began to go into particulars that the full infamy of our present social system became evident. I will select a few samples, so that the people of India may know how things are managed in this enlightened country, which sends them missionaries—and officials of various sorts.

(1) A boy of six has to peel onions for 20 hours a week for 8d.

(2) A boy of six has to turn hose for 20 hours a week for 6d., which is credited to his account in a savings bank.

(3) One child, under six, actually works at brickmaking in a brick field, and earns 3s. 6d. a week.

(4) A girl less than six years old has to nurse other children for 29 hours a week for 2d. and her food.

(5) Many little girls carried bark for woodcutters for 70 hours a week.

(6) One boy rose between three and four in the morning to call workmen, then had to distribute newspapers until nine, when he went to school, where he often slept.

These are but a few items from the horrible list. There were plenty of other details, such as that more than 17,000 children were earning less than sixpence a week in the way of wages. It did not strike me that the littleness of the wage was the worst point—it was the miserable notion of these youngsters, scarcely old enough to leave the nursery, having to face the work-a-day world, to work in brick fields and in factories half their time, and then try to concentrate their wearied little brains on school work. It is no doubt easier to point out the enormity of all this than to point to a remedy. But in this connexion two things strike me. First, the sooner we cease to prate about the exceptional happiness of children born in England as compared with those we are pleased to call "heathen" the better. And also, seeing that the House has this year passed by a very large majority the second reading of a Bill for raising the age at which children can be made half-timers (which means all work and no play), the Government ought to see to it that this Bill gets through its other stages and becomes law. I fear, however, that this is by no means certain. The fact is that in Lancashire there is a greedy custom on the part of parents of getting no small part of their income by exploiting their children. And the Government fears Lancashire. It deceived that county in more than one way at the last election, and it dare not offend the Lancashire mind further. There is something peculiarly detestable in seeing the opening years of little children's lives being thus deliberately sacrificed to what is known as "political expediency." It makes one think that politics is about the lowest form of human activity.

I spoke of Mr. Chamberlain and his connexion with the Old Age Pension farce when I wrote last week. That farce has been carried one stage further since then, for the Old Age Pension Committee has been appointed. I need hardly say that Mr. Chamberlain is not a member of it. He confines his efforts to making alluring speeches in the country, submitting "proposals" which are naturally taken to be promises, airily dangling "suggestions" before the poor deluded voter which are also naturally taken to be definite schemes easy of realisation. But when a committee is appointed which is to tackle the subject and to see if there is anything that can be done in a practical way, then Mr. Chamberlain stands astutely, not to say cunningly, aloof. This strikes me as a scandal, and it drew a protest from a Conservative member in the House—Mr. Bartley. With some humour, perhaps unconscious humour, Mr. Bartley said that Mr. Chamberlain had made this subject peculiarly his own in politics—and there can be no doubt about that. Therefore he argued that the Colonial Secretary should not only be a member of the Committee, but should be its chairman. But Mr. Balfour declared that Mr. Chamberlain was too busy, that he was weighted by too great a load of official responsibility to undertake any more duties, otherwise the Government would have been only too delighted to have the great advantage of his assistance. And while the polite farce was being played Mr. Chamberlain sat smiling at the ceiling, and the House knew perfectly well that the whole thing is a game. I should not be surprised if before long the voters begin to recognise that it is a game also, and that they are the pawns. There are few chapters in modern political history more disgraceful than this which contains the juggling and paltering of a great party with the deserving poor, raising their hopes, taking their votes, and leaving them in the lurch.

The formal second reading attack on the Budget was commenced on Monday in a long and rather solemn oration by Sir Henry Fowler. The shape in which Sir Henry's amendment originally appeared on the paper did not by any means please the Radicals, for while he condemned the permanent suspension of the Sinking Fund, he recognised the necessity of meeting the current expenses of the year. There was not a word to suggest that the expenses had been excessive or unwise, and the only effect of such an amendment could have been an academic debate. Moreover, on its rejection no one in following amendments could have dealt with the Sinking Fund part of the controversy. Not a few members therefore protested, and Sir Henry agreed to submit a direct motion for the rejection of the Budget altogether. I should be sorry to do him an injustice, but somehow or other Sir Henry Fowler seems a little too anxious to stand well with his opponents. I prefer the man who says what he means right out—as Sir William Harcourt does—and who cares not two straws whether the other side like it or not.

Sir William illustrated this fact by delivering a very fine speech in the continued debate on the Budget on Tuesday. He and Mr. Courtney, one from one side of the House and the other from the other, riddled and pounded and pulverised the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was really absurd to know, as everyone did know, that in spite of these unanswerable speeches, the Government would carry its Bill by a thumping majority, as of course it did. Argument and logic, reason, or rhetoric have but little to do with a debate of this sort.

There was a little debate raised by Mr. James Lowther on Tuesday with reference to the Lord Chancellor having taken part in a meeting at which a candidate for Oxford University was selected. There is a Sessional order of the House of Commons which forbids any peer to concern himself in a contested election. It is an old subject, and my only reason for referring to it here is because of a fine "Irishism," as it is called, which was perpetrated by an English member. Sir William Hart Dyke acknowledged that in "going for" the Lord Chancellor Mr. Lowther had aimed at a very highly placed individual. "He has gone to the very top of the tree, and has landed a big fish" observed the excited orator—and then he didn't know at what the members were laughing.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, April 27.—The House of Commons again went into Committee on the London Government Bill.

A Parliamentary paper issued to-day showed that down to the end of December last the number of certificates of conscientious objection under the Act of last Session received by the vaccination officers was 203,413, and the number of children to which such certificates related was 230,147.

Reports were received of further fighting in Samoa, extending, with intervals, from the 12th till the 17th of April. Two or three rebel strongholds, over which the German flag was flying, were captured, but the attack on one at Vailima was repulsed with some loss. The co-operation between the British and the American forces continued.

There was more stubborn fighting around Calumpit. The American troops eventually carried three lines of insurgent intrenchments, and advanced to Apalit, a place four miles beyond Calumpit.

Friday, April 28.—In the House of Lords the Metropolitan Water Companies Bill was read a second time.

In the House of Commons, in Committee of Supply on the Civil Service Estimates, Sir John Gorst made the annual statement on the Education Vote.

Mr. Asquith, speaking at Guildford, declared that the predominant note of the present Government was the note of timidity, and said the raid by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Sinking Fund had been properly described as an act of political poltroonery.

At a meeting of Unionist electors of Oxford University, held at St. Stephen's Club, the Lord Chancellor presiding, it was unanimously resolved, on the motion of Sir M. Hicks Beach, seconded by Mr. Goschen, that Sir W. R. Anson, Warden of All Souls' College, be invited to become the Unionist candidate for the vacancy in the representation of the University caused by the death of Sir John Mowbray.

General Luna, the commander of the Filipino forces, sent emissaries to General Otis at Manila to say that his Government desired a suspension of hostilities. General Otis replied that he could not in any way recognise the Filipino Government, and that peace could only be brought about by the surrender of the insurgents in arms.

SATURDAY, April 29.—Speaking at the Royal Academy banquet, Lord Salisbury announced that the Government had signed an agreement with Russia with respect to affairs in China which, to a certain extent, would, he thought, prevent any likelihood of collision between the interests and objects of the two Powers for the future. We had reason to congratulate ourselves that we were now in relations of amity with so many nations. Whether the forthcoming Peace Conference would effect any improvement in the relations of the nations to each other he did not know; but the very fact that such a conference should have been summoned was surely a good omen for future peace.

At a private meeting of Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, held at St. John's College, Oxford, the resolution of London electors for the University inviting Sir W. Anson to become a candidate for the representation in the room of the late Sir John Mowbray was unanimously endorsed; and Sir W. Anson subsequently accepted the invitation, subject to the acceptance by the Chancellor of his resignation of the Vice-Chancellorship.

Great dissatisfaction was expressed throughout Canada at the action of the Imperial Government in receding at the last moment from the plan of joint ownership of the Pacific Cable. In the Dominion Senate Sir M. Bowell attributed this change of attitude to the influence of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, and severely reflected on the conduct of the home officials.

The first Cretan Government under the autonomous *régime* was formed. It consisted of four Christians and one Mahometan.

At Manila the insurgent commissioners held a second conference with General Otis, who was accompanied by Admiral Dewey and Dr. Schurman, chairman of the American Civil Commission. The insurgent emissaries renewed their demand for an armistice until the Filipino Congress had decided for peace or a continuance of the struggle; but General Otis said that he had no authority to grant an armistice on such a basis. The envoys left the American lines in the afternoon. General Otis, in a despatch to Washington, said he believed the insurgents were tired of the war, but sought to secure terms of peace through their Congress. He had offered them a full amnesty on their surrender.

MONDAY, May 1.—In the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury stated that the Anglo-Russian agreement was a railway agreement concerning our fields of operation in China. While England agreed neither to undertake nor to encourage the construction of any railway by English persons or others north of the Great Wall, Russia, on the other hand, had made exactly similar stipulations with respect to the basin of the Yang-tsze. There were in the agreement certain provisions with regard to the railway to be made to Niu-chwang, and our interests in that respect were entirely protected. He was anxious not to appear to attach to the particular stipulations of this agreement an exaggerated importance; but he attached very great importance to the agreement itself as a sign of good feeling between the Governments of Great Britain and Russia.

In the House of Commons, on the motion for the second reading of the Budget, Sir H. Fowler moved that it be read a second time that day six months. He had given notice of the following amendment:—"This House, while recognising the necessity of providing for the expenditure of the current financial year, is of opinion that it is not expedient to reduce permanently the annual charge for the National Debt." This amendment, he explained, he had decided not to move, because it would narrow the scope of the debate.

The Anglo-Russian Agreement was the subject of comment and criticism in the Berlin and Paris journals. A Reuter despatch from St. Petersburg said the agreement was in the form of a Note, and that the preamble stated that both Powers agreed to uphold the integrity and independence of China.

TUESDAY, May 2.—In the House of Lords the Board of Education Bill passed through Committee.

In the House of Commons the second reading of the Budget was carried by 280 votes against 155.

Mr. Cecil Rhodes addressed a crowded meeting of the shareholders of the British South Africa Company. He said he thought the time had now come when the people of Rhodesia should contribute by taxation to the cost of government. He believed that in two years the revenue would balance the expenditure. He was satisfied that the country was highly mineralised, and he believed it would hold its own with the best gold-producing States of the world. They had been most successful as far as the development of the telegraph was concerned. Almost every town and village had it, and the extension through Africa was proceeding with the greatest success. He had been able to settle a reasonable rate with Egypt, and the German Emperor, who was a broad-minded man, had afforded him every help. Mr. Rhodes next described his railway schemes, repudiating the "wild cat" phrase, and warning "Little Englanders" that they would have to "look out" at the next election. He referred to the failure of his negotiations to secure a Government guarantee, and gave details of the sums he had raised by other means. If the shareholders did not subscribe the balance, he said, he had no doubt it would be obtained from the outside market without paying heavily for underwriting.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer received at the Treasury a deputation from various sections of the wine trade, protesting against the proposed increase of the wine duties. Sir M. Hicks-Beach intimated, in reply, that the increase in the duties was an essential part of the Budget, to which he must adhere, not merely because he wanted the money, but because the Government had made up its mind that that was the best source from which the additional taxation they required could be derived.

WEDNESDAY, May 3.—In the House of Commons the Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill was rejected by 217 votes against 143.

MISS MANNING'S VISIT TO INDIA.

MISS MANNING having recently returned from a cold-weather visit to India, I asked her for an interview in which we might discuss her impressions, and especially the condition in which she found the education of girls.

Miss Manning is the Hon. Sec. of the National Indian Association, whose two main objects are social intercourse and education in India. As secretary she succeeded Miss Mary Carpenter on her death in 1877. Her last visit to India was ten years ago, so that naturally my first question was whether she saw much change between 1889 and 1899.

"Some change, and it seemed to me for the better, despite the havoc in organisation that has been worked by famine and plague. India is not the country where one could wish or expect rapid change. Take for instance some people's notion that the abolition of caste would be beneficial. Caste is the whole social and religious fabric of the continent. We can only hope that the Indians will themselves modify it here and there in order to allow of the growth and assimilation of some of the ideas of the West."

"I hope that you marked a little progress in some of the directions desired by the National Indian Association, such as women's education, the growth of friendly intercourse between Indians and Europeans?"

"I think I did; I felt well pleased with the results of my visit. My object was twofold—to assist to revive some of the branches of our Association. These suffer a good deal by the constant change which increased railway communication in India and steam communication with Britain have brought about. We have excellent secretaries in some parts; promotion, furlough, sickness, change of locality prevent their staying long in one place, so that it is important to find out who can take up work that has been dropped, and how it can be developed."

"And your other object was educational?"

"Yes, I wished to see the state of the girls' schools. Here I should just like to say that the visitor to so vast a continent as India must select his route and his work; he can only see a small part of the whole. My visit being largely mapped out for me on the lines of our Association and its work, to which indeed I could have devoted far more time had it been possible, many things that interest me personally had to be passed by. As I moved from place to place, I could not have seen more than half what I did see, but for kind friends and colleagues, who organised, as it were, my visit to their locality, and thus allowed me to use my time to greater advantage than I could otherwise have done."

"What route did you take?"

"Bombay first, then Surat, where I stayed a day or two beside Rukhmabai, now managing a small Dufferin hospital. You remember her as a student at the London School of Medicine. It was a real pleasure to me to see so many who had been students in England preparing for work in India, now settled in their own land, and doing the thing they had meant to do. Though their ideas had been enlarged by their visit to the West, yet the bridge was not broken down between them and their own people, but considerable communication was maintained. Then I passed on to Ahmedabad, and to

Allahabad, where I stayed with Miss Cornelia Sorabji and her brother. From thence to Calcutta where I spent three weeks in the delightful home of Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Roy. Then down to Madras where I had a fortnight with my old friend, Mrs. Brander, Inspector of girls' schools there. At Hyderabad (Deccan) I stayed with Mrs. G. Naidu, an ex-Girton student; then to Poona and Bombay once more. It sounds very little, but it kept me very busy. Plague prevented my visiting Mysore as I much wished to do."

"Did it hinder you in other ways?"

"It has disorganised things in Bombay pretty seriously; it will take years to make up the ground there. But personally it only made me suffer the inconvenience of reporting myself every morning for ten consecutive days at the Madras police station. It was a species of quarantine, due to the fact that somehow I was wrongly registered as coming from Bombay, whereas, I had come from Calcutta. I do not profess to have liked it, but fortunately the station was near Mrs. Brander's house. I reported myself at 7 a.m., and then I sat down and wrote up these notes," and Miss Manning handled a fat note book on the table before her.

"Unlike the passengers in Mark Twain's 'Quaker City,' you succeeded in keeping a journal?"

"I had to mark down all the schools I saw, and the way they impressed me, with a few facts about each. Otherwise, seeing so many, one would have a very confused impression of them. It is so easy to mix them all in your mind. The schools are very various: mission schools, Parsi, Hindu—some of which are municipal—a few Mahometan—as yet very few—besides the division into primary, secondary, and schools for higher or college education. They are so various that hardly anything can be said that applies to them all. Perhaps most improvement was observable in Madras. The code has been much altered, and brought more into harmony with modern ideas on education. It was a great misfortune for India that when she borrowed the educational system of the West, it was unreformed, scarcely touched by ideas which have effected a revolution in the world of education at home."

"What in particular do you refer to?"

"Monotonous learning by rote, repetition of what was barely comprehended, lack of correlation in studies, importance attached to isolated facts, the monotony of the programme, dulness, lifelessness. The changes effected have been the introduction of kindergarten methods, training of the hand and eye, the introduction of practical subjects such as hygiene, domestic economy, cooking, drawing, music, games to develop physique and maintain interest."

"And what of the teachers?"

"Yes, much, indeed nearly all, depends on them. Far too much of the teaching is still in the hands of old men who are hardly fit for anything else, and who make teaching deadly dull and monotonous, as mechanical as it well can be. You find such teachers largely in the municipal schools, but not entirely."

"What other defects did you notice in municipal schools?"

"Unsatisfactory rooms, not fitted for school purposes, overcrowding, insufficient apparatus. Hours are not so very long—ten to three or four—if variety had been introduced, but as dull monotony obtained, they certainly were too long for small children. Then, where men teach, the girls are taken away sooner, and they leave early enough even where women teach. I remember one municipal school where the roof had holes in it, which would prove serious in the monsoon—a boys' school. The National Indian Association Secretary at Poona interested herself in the municipal girls' schools, and succeeded in infusing some degree of life and energy into them."

"Schools, above almost all other institutions, require external interest to stimulate them."

"Perhaps especially in India, where a prejudice exists against female education and where great names count for even more than here. I had a private interview with Lady Curzon who is interested in this subject. She has consented to be patroness of the branch of our association at Calcutta."

"Is the prejudice against female education decreasing in India?"

"On the whole, yes; but it dies slowly. With the new methods of teaching, especially by trained women teachers who know how to awaken and sustain interest, the little girls are often becoming quite fond of going to school, and mothers and grandmothers have to give way a little to their wishes. You know how the joint-family system obtains in India, and how the older women rule the younger ones, often far too thoroughly. But even the grandmothers have to give in a little, though they do not often approve the new methods. There is a good deal of suspicion and dislike. A girl goes home with some new ideas on hygiene, perhaps especially ventilation, and we hear that difference of opinion, the clashing of the old and the new, is apt to arise."

"It is a subject on which we are not well agreed at home. What did you think of the big schools, where education is better regarded and the daughters of the well-to-do attend?"

"There are some good schools, housed in fine buildings, to be seen now. There is the Alexandra Native Girls' Institution at Bombay, founded by a Parsi judge, Mr. Mannockji Cursetji, in memory of his daughter. He is now dead, but his married son and his daughter continue to take great interest in the work. Formerly the English system was imitated in rather too servile a fashion, but now new methods obtain. The head mistress, Miss Hunt, is an Englishwoman, and has an able staff of Parsi ladies round her. The school has perhaps 100 pupils, Parsis chiefly, and a few Hindus attend."

"Do the Hindus mix well with the others?"

"Not very; they have quite different associations, but they behave excellently at school. Girls matriculate from the school now, and at the prize distribution the other day Mr. Justice Ranade alluded to the desirability of having higher classes to prepare for the First Arts. The building is handsome, a large hall with class-rooms opening off it, and it is well endowed. Then there is also the Bhicaji Shapoorji Bengali school at Bombay, also located in an excellent building and with a Parsi as headmistress. The girls looked happy and seemed well taught. They performed some very graceful Indian exercises and games. Geography is well taught; I was pleased to see a clay model of Bombay; little girls named the streets and chief buildings. Some bigger children gave a good description of the municipal government of the city, including the finances. There was also a little dialogue acted called 'A Thirsty Girl,' in English; and very pretty it was. Khan Bahadur D. R. Chichgar has done much for the Parsi schools."

"All the lessons are not in English?"

"No; all lessons in junior classes are in Guzerati, but in the upper classes English is often the medium. It is found to be disadvantageous socially for a girl not to know English, and girls are beginning to take it up like their brothers. Indian girls are very bright, and many of those I saw were self-possessed, though retiring in manner. When the inspector was looking at one small girl's work she observed: 'I could have done many other patterns, but teacher told me to do this one.'"

"Limitations imposed on her talents. Did you see the Bethune College in Calcutta?"

"Yes; there is a secondary school and a college there under the same management. Miss Bose is the head, the first lady graduate of Calcutta University. It was founded for orthodox Hindus by the Hon. Drinkwater Bethune, but now it has also many Christians and Brahmos as pupils. It has absorbed a private school, conducted by Miss Akroyd (Mrs. Beveridge) up to the time of her marriage, and has added a boarding department. Improved methods are in vogue here also, and a girl can pass from the junior department right up to preparation for the B.A."

"Has the examination craze done as much harm to education as the Principal of Aligurh College thinks?"

"Perhaps it is being felt a little in Calcutta, but it is too early for girls' education to suffer much yet; examination has been a stimulus to improve the curriculum and the teaching."

"Do Brahman women teach yet?"

"Very seldom. They leave school too early, at eleven or twelve—but some widows of this caste are teachers. It would be well if teachers could more often have the opportunity for training. Two or three homes for widows exist; Mr. Bannerjee's near Calcutta has been very useful, but little is done in this direction compared with what needs to be done. I did not visit many mission schools; they are looked after by the missionary societies, so I attended to other institutions."

"You spoke of music being taught to the girls. Is not that an innovation?"

"Yes, I think the schools can claim to have rehabilitated music. It has been regarded as an adjunct of low life, unsuited for the refined. But now girls learn to sing at school and to play musical instruments. Yes, our method is used by English teachers, but I like the Indian music and am glad that it is cultivated in the schools."

Miss Manning was received everywhere in India with deepest gratitude and affection, her services and devotion to Indian education being fully recognised. In many places parties and entertainments were arranged in her honour; she had the pleasure of finding them attended by Indian ladies as well as gentlemen. At Ahmedabad the Ladies' Institute had a mixed party to meet Miss Manning. The Institute was only talked of in 1889, but now it holds meetings, gives lectures, and Indian ladies indulge in such games as chess, dominoes, draughts, bagatelle, badminton. Surely Miss Manning might say with Galileo, only that we are now told the saying is apocryphal, *E pur si muove!*

C. S. B.

IMPERIAL AND PROVINCIAL FINANCE.

NO REMISSION OF TAXATION.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, April 15.

The most important topics discussed in the Indian press during the week have been the Provincial contracts and the need of remission of taxation, which were the theme of much "manuscript eloquence" during the Budget debate. As to the first there is a consensus of opinion that the Indian Government is dealing most unfairly by the Provinces—that these Provinces are not allowed at every quinquennium to reserve their fair share of the increment of the revenue, which their diligence has

been able to obtain. The Imperials are drones and prodigals, while the Provincials are the "busy bees" who gather the provincial honey. Yet the prodigal, because of his might resisters, pounces upon that honey, as soon as it is gathered, and starves the bees who have laboured hard to get it. The worst of it is that the Imperialists fritter away the larger portion of the increment on unprofitable objects like frontier pyrotechnics. The plague and the famine have hit hard some of the Provinces, and the niggardly way in which *our* Chancellor of the Exchequer has treated them is the subject of general complaint, in which the Governments of those Provinces themselves have joined. For instance, the other day Sir John Woodburn complained of Bengal, and later Sir Arthur Havelock more than grumbled at the doles doled out to his Madras Government. The fact is that the present principle is unsound and needs radical overhauling. The correct principle is to make the provincials financially stronger by allowing the central authority a certain limited percentage of each Province's growing revenue. The more the Imperialists at present sweep away the funds of the provincials, the greater is their temptation to grab. Their gold-hunger is greater than their earth-hunger. It is said that the whole question is now before the autocrat on your side. This augurs ill for the justice to the provincials. It remains to be seen what the coming despatch may have to say.

Then there is general complaint regarding the new policy of accumulating surplus instead of remitting taxation. It is thought that Government reserves or disposes of surplus as it suits its exigences. The last surplus of 1895-96 was hastily disposed of—half a crore going to Manchester for nothing, though all India protested against the remission of one and a-half per cent. duty on cotton goods. The cry everywhere is for a remission of the enhanced duty on salt. Yet strangely enough the exchange compensation allowance is not yet abolished. While the well-paid members of the services are allowed to fatten on this allowance the masses, who contribute towards that allowance, are tantalised and yet deprived of the remission on their salt, though Viceroy after Viceroy promised that the duty should go as soon as the finances permitted. The finances at present amply permit, but the authorities now want it for accumulating a gold reserve for their quack currency reform. So the Imperial financier tells the world that our surplus is no "assured" surplus. People ask what may be an "assured" surplus. Will Sir William Harcourt or Sir Michael Hicks-Beach or Mr. Goschen answer the conundrum.

Sir Antony MacDonnell is perhaps the most popular of all our provincial satraps, as he is also the most capable. There is none to surpass him in administrative ability and statesmanship. Whenever he has occasion to address the public he delivers himself of sentiments which, apart from their sympathy, go straight to the hearts of the people. The other day he made some practical observations on the dearness of inland railway freights while opening the Jamna-Gogra section of the railway system of the North-West Provinces. He broadly hinted that the companies should consider this matter. He gave an instance of the cheap freights charged from London to Karachi on certain stores required for his Government, being astounded that for the short distance between Karachi and Lucknow the freight charged by the railway companies was fifty per cent. higher. No doubt private companies are monopolists, and generally defy the trading public where there are no competitive lines. The reduction of inland railway freights is a crying need. Let us hope that this is one of the twelve problems in the note-book of our new Viceroy.

The vapourings of the journal *Kal* and the vicious tendencies of its recent articles on the Chapekars have been the subject of much condemnation and some hot controversy. Both the Calcutta and the Bombay Standing Congress Committees have proscribed the writer. The latter Committee has excommunicated him "with bell, book and candle." Some of the newspapers are indulging in gross misrepresentations. The *Champion* is trying its best to give a fair and unvarnished tale. But this is objected to by the *Kal*ists. It is a matter for regret that some scribes will never exercise discretion and judgment, and it is even more grievous that a handful of "Extremists" should openly encourage what every sober person and true friend of India must unhesitatingly condemn as seditious.

THE INDIAN CURRENCY COMMITTEE.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

The following reply has been received to Sir William Wedderburn's letter of March 24 (printed in INDIA of March 31, page 166):—

India Office,
April 28, 1899.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 24th ultimo, which was read to the Indian Currency Committee at their last meeting, I have the honour to inform you that Mr. D. E. Wacha's speech at the Congress held at Madras in December last has been printed for the Committee's information. The same applies to the statements submitted by Mr. Martin Wood and Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji.

I am to add, with reference to your letter of February 27 last, that no report of Mr. Iyer's speech at the Congress has reached me, but that if a copy be sent it shall be printed forthwith.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ROBERT CHALMERS,
Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P. *Secretary,*

THE MUTILATION OF THE MAHDI'S BODY.

INDIGNATION OF MAHOMETANS.

THE following petition appears in the recently issued Report of the Select Committee on Public Petitions:—

App. 35. *Mr. Charles M'Arthur.* Sig. 1.

1845. The humble Petition of the undersigned sheweth:

That at a meeting of persons professing the Muslim faith and residing in England, held in the lecture hall of the Liverpool Muslim Institute, West Derby Road, in the city of Liverpool, on the 21st day of March, 1899, it was unanimously resolved:

Resolved: "That this meeting hereby records its earnest protest against the outrage that was committed in the Sudan, in the rifling of the tomb of he who was called the Mahdi at Omdurman, and the mutilation of his corpse, and respectfully requests the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain to hold an enquiry with reference to the same, so that the perpetrators of the scandalous outrage can be reprimanded and punished, and that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to Her Majesty the Queen, Lord Salisbury, and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman."

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your honourable House will cause an enquiry to be granted into the above matter in accordance with the sentiments of the said Resolution.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.

Signed on behalf of the persons assembled at
such meeting as aforesaid,
W. H. ABDULLAH QUILLIANY,
Sheikh-ul-Islam of the British Isles and Chairman of the said Meeting.

6, Manchester Street, Liverpool.

The editor of the *Moslem Chronicle* (Calcutta) publishes the following in his issue of April 8:—

It is satisfactory that there are soldiers as well as civilians who view with disgust the outrage perpetrated on the corpse of the Mahdi. In proof of that I publish the following letter, one of several that I have received from Army correspondents.

It is to be hoped that you will press further enquiries into the matter of the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb. It may, or may not be true that the Anglo-Egyptian rule in the Sudan is so weak that it could not ensure itself against a revival of Mahdism without removing the false prophet's remains from their resting place and throwing them into the Nile. If it be true, then General Kitchener should have seen that necessary but regrettable measure was carried out with as little absolute indecency as possible. But the story, which has been current for some time, and which was repeated by the *Morning Post* (without any suggestion of disapproval) that the skull and some of the bones of the Mahdi were secured by British officers as trophies, and are still in their possession, is a scandalous disgrace, not only to the British Army, but to the whole nation and to all civilisation. If false, it should be authoritatively contradicted. If true, no punishment would be too severe for the barbarians who can so disgrace their cloth and their country. I am confident that this opinion will be shared by everyone who is, as I am,—A British Officer.

The same issue of the *Moslem Chronicle* publishes the following passage under the heading "The Hungarian Press on the Desecration of the Sudanese Moslem's Tomb":—

In the various Mussulman countries—not the least civilised in the world—one has received with a sensation of profound horror the news of the unjustifiable act committed by the English troops at Omdurman under command of General Kitchener, and one has above all revolted at the cynicism with which at recent session of the Chamber of Communes, Mr. Brodrick, Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, has pretended to explain, if not to justify, a misdeed forewarned (anticipated, or hindered) and severely punished

by the penal legislature of all nations. In fact, to the question of M. Scott, asking whether it is true that after the taking of Omdurman they had violated the burial place of the Mahdi, mutilated and thrown his dead body into the Nile, Mr. Brodrick has had the audacity to reply that this was perfectly correct, adding that the superstitious respect attached to the memory of the Mahdi had necessitated the taking of these extraordinary measures for fear of new complications in the Sudan. However the great majority of the English Press felt compelled to condemn, in a more or less energetic manner, the barbarous and ignoble act of Kitchener and his soldiers, we find that the British Government are all morally responsible for the awful crime committed at Omdurman as long as they have not caused to be applied to the guilty, high or low, all the rigour of English laws relating to the violation of sepulture (or burial ground).

From the *Reveue d'Orient* Buda-Pesth, Hungary translated by Mrs. Khadijah Quilliam-Holehouse.

LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY'S RESOLUTION.

The London Indian Society, at its meeting on Saturday last, April 29, unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

This meeting deeply regrets the action of the authorities in dealing with the remains and tomb of the Mahdi at Omdurman, as tending to offend the religious feeling of the Mahometans throughout the world as well as the sense of humanity of all the civilised world, and to lower the reputation of the British Government as a humane and civilising Power.

THE INDIAN PRESS.

As indicating the strong feeling excited in India by the outrage the following extracts from Indian journals are worth noting.

The *Bengalee* wrote (March 18):—

Despite the prevalence of the jingo spirit in England, the exhumation of the body of the Madhi, and the dishonour done to his remains by throwing them into the Nile, have awakened the indignation of the British public. It was a dishonour done not only to the Sudanese and their prophet, but it is an affront to the Mahometan world, and even to that wider public who have learnt to treat with respect the religious beliefs of people differing from them in faith. Whatever the political justification of the preceeding might be, it has given a shook to the civilised world, and it has recalled traditions of barbarism worthy only of the dark ages. The fear of the recrudescence of fanaticism is the excuse for this act of barbarity. Lord Kitchener might have trusted to the omnipotence of England—he might have relied with confidence upon those military resources which had triumphed over fanaticism. But he chose a shorter and apparently a more expeditious means, with the result that he has covered his name with opprobrium. The future historian will turn to this incident in connexion with the subjugation of the Sudan with scorn and indignation. Contemporaries might condone the act. The verdict of the historian is inexorable.

The *Mahratta* said (March 26):—

Rudyard Kipling confines the white man's burden to the "savage wars of peace." But since the battle of Omdurman the burden has been made heavier by the addition of the sin of barbarities committed in those really "savage wars." Now that the first madness of joy over the victories of Sirdar Kitchener has abated, public opinion in England has begun to assert itself against some of the barbarities committed by the British army against the Dervishes. It was alleged that the British army showed no mercy to the wounded enemy on the field of Omdurman, but shot them wholesale. The allegation was indeed repudiated, but somehow or other the impression is yet sticking, and has not altogether been effaced, that the British army did act inhumanly in putting bullets into the body of the wounded Dervish soldiers. But another, and a more damaging charge, was made against the Sirdar personally, viz., that he ordered the Mahdi's body to be exhumed from his tomb at Omdurman and to be thrown into the Nile. And this charge has been proved on the admission of the Sirdar himself. It was of course alleged in extenuation of the crime that the Mahdi's tomb, if left intact, might prove a centre of disaffection among the Dervishes, and that thus under the circumstances the step was necessary. But evidently no sensible man believes in the necessity, and the Sirdar's name will for ever be associated with one of the most scandalous barbarities that was ever committed in civilised warfare of the present day. The fear of the Sirdar about the innocent relic situated in the heart of the British army at Omdurman is, if anything, more demoralising than the superstition of the Dervishes, and something ought to have been done to cure the Sirdar's mind from this fear before the Gordon college was instituted to purge the Dervish mind of its superstition and ignorance. If the Sirdar is afraid of a single dead man's bones, why at all think of enforcing a despotic rule over the millions of living Dervishes? The true explanation of the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb lies in the fact that in the dangerous moment of madness of triumph the Sirdar forgot that he belonged to a race that claims to be civilised and humane, but that his real instincts got the upper-hand in an unguarded moment.

The Earl of Elgin, ex-Viceroy of India, has accepted an invitation to dine with the Northbrook Society at the Imperial Institute on Tuesday, May 16. The Earl of Northbrook, president of the society, will take the chair, and the Earl of Rosebery, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, Lord George Hamilton, M.P., the Earl of Kimberley, Viscount Cross, Lord Loch, and many other distinguished persons will be present. Lord Rosebery is to propose the health of the guest of the evening.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, April 27.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE AGITATION FOR A "PASTEUR INSTITUTE" IN INDIA.

With reference to the first of the two questions reported under this heading in our issue of last week the following supplementary questions were asked and answered:—

Sir W. Wedderburn: Are there any special circumstances to account for the large increase in the number of cases of hydrophobia during the last six months?

Lord G. Hamilton: I am afraid I am not aware of any large increase.

Sir E. Ashmead Bartlett: Is it not possible to make arrangements to treat these soldiers in India?

Lord G. Hamilton: That raises a point which is dealt with in the next question.

DISABILITIES OF INDIANS IN BRITISH COLONIES.

Sir William Wedderburn: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he would grant a Return showing the disabilities or restrictions to which British Indians were subjected in the several British Colonies and Dependencies, citing in each case the statutes or byelaws relating thereto.

Mr. J. Chamberlain: Yes. It will involve reference to the Colonies and will therefore take some time to prepare.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

Mr. Maclean asked the Secretary of State for India whether it would be possible for bounty-giving States, under the promised exemption of British goods from the Indian Sugar Duties Act, to render the Act inoperative by sending to this country goods intended for the Indian market, and trans-shipping them at London or Southampton into British vessels bound for Bombay.

Lord G. Hamilton: My hon. friend is mistaken in supposing that any exemption of British goods from the operation of the Indian Sugar Duties Act has been promised. That Act will be administered, necessarily, by the Government of India, who must deal with cases as they arise by the light of experience and according to circumstances. I stated on the 18th and again on the 20th of April that, in view of the comparatively small amount of the export of confectionery from this country to India, and of the difficulty of estimating the quantity of sugar in a given quantity of confectionery, I did not think it likely that the Government of India would in this case insist upon their rights. But it is certain that they will grant no exception which could have the effect described in my hon. friend's question, and it is equally certain that there would be no difficulty whatever in framing regulations which would effectively prevent any wholesale evasion of the duty as is suggested.

Mr. Maclean: Can the noble lord say how it is possible to distinguish between goods sent to India in British ships; and if they are all manufactured from the same kind of sugar?

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes, as the practice is to state on the papers the ports from which the goods are shipped.

Mr. Maclean asked how the Custom-house officials in India would be able to distinguish between the shipments.

Lord G. Hamilton said the clearance papers would enable them to do so.

Friday, April 28.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE PLAGUE.

Mr. Monckton asked the Secretary of State for India, if he could inform the House whether the plague had reached Durbungur and Mozufferpore, in Behar; and, if so, what was the rate of mortality.

Lord G. Hamilton: The plague reached Durbungur a month ago. During the fortnight ending April 3, forty-two plague deaths were reported from the Durbungur district. For the fortnight ending April 24, only one plague death has been reported.

One plague death was reported from the Mozufferpore district during the week ending April 3. Since that week, and before that week, no plague deaths are reported to have occurred in that district.

Monday, May 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY IN INDIA. RETURN PRESENTED.

East India (Sugar Importation and Cultivation).—Return presented relative thereto (ordered April 24—Sir William Wedderburn); to lie upon the Table and to be printed.

PROPOSED HOSPITAL SHIP.

Dr. Farquharson asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that upwards of 200 sick and wounded officers and 2,500 men were annually brought home as invalids from India and the Colonies, and that the present method of conveyance by hired troopship service had been unfavourably reported upon in the Army Medical Blue-book for 1897, he would consider whether the War Office could establish a permanent hospital ship for this service.

Mr. Powell Williams: The provision of a hospital ship for conveying the sick and wounded from India to this country would rest with the Indian Government, and, after very full consideration, the Secretary of State is not prepared to press the adoption of such a

system upon that department. The balance of advantage is not by any means entirely on the side of a hospital ship for the conveyance of invalids as against their more rapid and frequent conveyance on board transports, in the equipment of which great improvements have recently taken place. These considerations apply with special force to our widely scattered colonial garrisons, invalids from which are sent home by packet at the earliest possible opportunity.

COUNTERVAILING DUTIES IN INDIA.

Captain SINCLAIR asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of the Colony of Victoria paid any bounty, direct or indirect, on the production of wine; and, if so, whether such wine would be liable to a countervailing duty if imported into India.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I understand that the Government of Victoria have in the past spent money to encourage the production of wine in that Colony; but I doubt whether they have ever taken any measure which would bring their wines under the operation of the Indian Act. As I have already stated in this House, the Act will be administered by the Government of India, who must be guided by circumstances and by experience in dealing with the various cases as they arise.

THE HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS.

Major RASCH asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, taking into consideration the fact that the increase in the number of British soldiers invalided home from India for venereal disease was 20 per cent. over the preceding year in 1895, 60 per cent. in 1896, and 199 per cent. in 1897 over the figure for 1894, he would at once increase the stringency of the regulations now in force.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I must refer my honourable and gallant friend to the answer I gave to his question on this subject on the 9th March. If the improvement which, as I then said, has begun to show itself in the admission rate for these diseases is continuous, as I trust it may be, a reduction in the number of invalidings may be expected to follow, though necessarily somewhat later. Until the present regulations have had a fair trial, I do not propose to take any further action.

Thursday, May 4.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION WORKS.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state how much of the Rx. 9,850,500, entered in the revised estimate of the Indian Budget as capital expenditure on railways and irrigation works during the year 1898-9, was taken from cash balances, and how much from loans;

Whether he could also state how much of the Rx. 10,433,600 of capital expenditure, proposed to be spent in 1899-1900 for similar public purposes, would be raised from loans, and how much from current revenues;

And, what sum of this large capital outlay would be allocated for water storage and irrigation purposes.

Lord G. HAMILTON: According to the Estimates, the capital expenditure is to be thus met: In 1898-99, from revenue, Rx. 713,100; from borrowed money, Rx. 1,200,000; from the cash balances, Rx. 4,662,800; to be supplied by companies working under a firm guarantee from the Government, Rx. 3,274,600: making the amount of Rx. 9,850,500 quoted by the honourable member. Similarly, in 1899-1900, from revenue, Rx. 523,600; from borrowed money, nothing; from the cash balances, 6,147,200; to be supplied by companies working under a firm guarantee, 3,001,900; making a total of Rx. 9,672,700. The honourable member, in the amount which he gives for 1899-1900, seems to have included the outlay by branch line and independent companies which does not come into the Government accounts, and which amounts to Rx. 1,470,100 and Rx. 950,300 in the two years, respectively. If these are included, the total outlay is estimated at Rx. 11,320,600 in 1898-99, and Rx. 10,623,000 in 1899-1900.

The capital expenditure on works of irrigation etc., it is estimated at Rx. 722,600 in 1998-99, and Rx. 896,600 in 1899-1900; besides the outlay from revenue on the construction of minor works, of which no capital account is kept.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state what had been the net deficiency on the working of the Indian railway system during the year just closed, and what was the estimated financial result of the operations of Indian railways for the current year;

And, similarly, what was the profit, if any, under the head of irrigation during the year just closed, and what was the estimated profit from the same source for the current year, including the gain accruing to the land revenue from irrigated areas.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The estimates show, as regards railways, a reduction of the deficiency from Rx. 2,660,000 in 1896-97 and Rx. 1,432,600 in 1897-98, to Rx. 878,100 in 1898-99 and Rx. 880,600 in 1899-1900. The hon. member is of course aware that the variations in the deficiency are mainly dependent on the rate of exchange at which the payments in England are made. In India the profit on the working of the railways was 5·20 per cent. in 1896, 5·08 in 1897 (when the famine and plague affected the returns), and 5·30 in 1898. In respect of irrigation the estimates show a profit of Rx. 239,600 in 1898-99, and of Rx. 116,300 in 1899-1900.

THE SEA POST OFFICE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that since the cheap rate of postage to India heavy additional work had fallen upon the sorters of the Sea Post Office between Bombay and Aden:

Whether in March last the number of bags in a single mail exceeded 1,000, whereas five years ago the average was barely half that number:

Whether the sorters had usually to work from 6.30 a.m. to 11 p.m.:

And, whether he would cause such reasonable additions to be made to the staff as would prevent excessive pressure and unduly long hours of work in a tropical climate.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have received as yet no information as to the amount of additional work thrown upon the sorters of the Sea Post Office by the recent reduction in the rate of postage, but I will communicate with the Government of India on the subject.

PASSAGE MONEY.

Mr. TALBOT asked the Secretary of State for India whether it was possible to grant to the members of the Indian Civil Service the same advantages with regard to passage money which were allowed to police and forest officers.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The two cases which are contrasted in my right hon. friend's question do not stand on the same footing. The Indian civilian has advantages both before he leaves for India, and after his arrival there, which the police and forest officers do not enjoy. But on the other hand it has never been the practice to pay for his passage to India, and I see no sufficient reason, as at present advised, for making any change in this respect.

THE DETENTION OF THE BROTHERS NATU. EXPENSES OF MAINTENANCE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India would he state what was the amount of the expenses incurred on account of the maintenance of the brothers Natu since their arrest; whether any portion of those expenses was charged to the Natu estate; and, if so, under what provision of law such a charge was made.

Lord G. HAMILTON: According to the accounts as yet received, the payments made up to July 31, 1898, out of their estate for the maintenance of the two brothers amounted to Rs. 1,912 0 as. 4 pies. I have not received accounts of the total cost of their maintenance up to that date, nor of the expenditure from their estates after that date. The charge made against their estates under management was incurred under sec. 2 Regulation XXV of 1827, and in accordance with the advice of the legal officers of Bombay.

THE "FORWARD" AGITATION ABOUT TIBET.

Mr. DRAGE asked the Secretary of State for India, whether reports had been received by the Indian Government from the British agent at Ladak and Yarkand with regard to the rapid decrease of the trade of British India with Russian Turkestan;

Whether those reports stated that the trade was likely still further to decrease owing to the extension of the Russian railway to Andijan;

And whether any suggestions were made in these reports which the Government could adopt for the development of the trade of India with China, through Tibet, to make up for the loss thus sustained.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Ladak trade returns for the latest year show a decrease in the trade of India with Chinese Turkestan, which the Assistant-Resident in Ladak attributes to the duty levied in India upon hemp exported from Yarkand. The Resident in Kashmir thinks it possible that improved communications with Russian centres may cause further decline in the Indo-Yarkand trade.

The Government of India has been considering measures for improving trade between India and Tibet *viâ* Sikkim, and the Viceroy is in communication with the Imperial Commissioner of Tibetan affairs on the subject.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

On April 30 Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji delivered a lecture at the Temperance Hall, Compton Street, London, on "England's Treatment of India." Mr. George R. Bloore presided.

On April 23 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee gave an address at the Rochdale Labour Church on "The Ethical Aspect of English Rule in India." There was a large congregation, and the lecture was much appreciated.

On April 25 Miss A. Garland gave a lantern lecture on "India and Its People" at the Reform Club, Rochdale. There was a good attendance, presided over by Mr. William Watson. The arrangements were carried out by the Women's Liberal Association.

On April 26 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee gave a limelight lecture on "British Rule in India" at the Liberal Club, Heywood. Councillor Jackson presided over a large attendance.

On April 27 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee addressed the Fulledge Liberal Club, Burnley, on "Some Liberal Reforms for India." Mr. F. Slater presided over a full house.

The P. and O. s.s. "Carthage" arrived in London, from Bombay, on April 30, with the following, among other passengers:—Lieut.-Col. E. E. Lawford; Col. P. K. L. Beaver; Lieut.-Col. C. H. Westmorland; Mr. K. B. Divatia; Mr. A. F. Abdur Rahman; Brig.-Gen. and Mrs. C. A. Spragge; Lady Wingate and children; and Lady Davies.

The s.s. "Arabia" (P. and O.) left London for Bombay on April 27. Her passenger-list includes the following names:—Rev. J. J. O'Callaghan; Dr. A. Hassan; Mr. N. Peerozshaw; Lady Havelock; Mr. A. Bonero; Major A. C. Le Marchand; Major A. M. Lochlan; Captain G. S. Ogg; Captain F. P. C. Elliott Lockhart; and Captain C. M. Cartwright.

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